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COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ITS EFFECT ON THE PERFORMANCE BUSINESS ENTERPRISES IN KANO, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This research work examined the effect of covid-19 pandemic on business performance with reference to ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano as a case study. The study used descriptive, cross sectional and correlational designs to explore the relationship between covid-19 pandemic and business performance. The study used the probability sampling of simple random. A self-administered questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from the field. The research instrument was validated using face and content validity and arrived at content validity index of above 0.70. The reliability of the study was also ascertained using Cronbach alpha and arrived at Cronbach Alpha coefficient above 0.70. The regression results revealed that there is no significant relationship between covid-19 pandemic and business performance (sig. = 0.400), which revealed that 82% or ($R^2=0.821$, $p<0.05$) of variation in business performance was explained by covid-19 pandemic. The study recommends that the negative impact of covid-19 (social distance, lockdown and travel restrictions) on business performance and individuals were much, governments should ease the lockdown with good measure in place so that people may return to business. Also, Nigerian Emergency Economic Stimulus Bill content of 2020 should be properly implemented, including key insights, consideration and strategies for COVID-19 response in Nigeria in order to improve business performance.

Keywords: Covid-19; Business Performance; Travel Restriction; Social Distancing; Large Gathering Prevention

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic creates a great crisis for the whole world, (Chai, 2019). This pandemic develops a conflict between earnings and safety. All the organization has to stop its regular schedule and introduce a new system to communicate as well as to conduct its daily work. Managers have to take a critical decision in this crisis to save the organizations and their employee's interests (Van der Meer et al. 2017; Van Zoonen & Van der Meer, 2015). The situation from June or July started to become normal but still, we have to live with COVID-19. This is a great challenge for the management to conduct daily work as per the 'new normal' schedule with various new rules for everyone's safety purpose. Organizations taking the help of technologies to communicate but only white-collar and professional employees are effective to do so (Karin et. al., 2020).

For the employees working in manufacturing organizations, customer services, or any position where direct communication is required were hampered heavily because of COVID-19. These employees around the world are in the most dangerous situation. Even education sectors are also affected by COVID-19 (Wang, et al.2020). Work from home even doesn't go well often. Conducting work at the same time take care of family and children creates role conflict. These issues hampered the overall performance of employees. There are several changes imposed by the government to maintain safety, people at workplaces must be equipped with masks, physical distance, washing hands, and use hand sanitizer all along (Wolor et.al, 2020).

Organizational performance also depends on employees' mental condition. During COVID-19 pandemic employees were most concerned about

safety. Hamouche (2020) mentions in her article that employee's mental health specifically stresses and depression. Employees are most concerned about safety, risk of virus, social exclusion, financial loss, and job insecurity. These are the main reason for employees' stress and loss of performance at the workplace. The organization needs to assure the safety of employees' health, social distance, financial security, and job security to reduce stress and enhance employee's performance (Sasaki et.al. 2020).

Governments at various level federal, state and local governments) have done much in order to curtail the spread of covid-19 (corona-virus) in the society. For instance covid-19 crisis has already transformed into an economic and labour market shock, impacting not only supply (production of goods and services) but also demand (consumption and investment and disrupts production in which now spread to supply chains across the world). Thus, businesses regardless of size are facing serious challenges, especially those in business industries, with a real threat of significant declines in revenue, insolvencies and job losses in specific sectors such as manufacturing industries. Sustaining business operations will be particularly difficult for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), Mondy, E. 2020. Following movement on bans, border closures and quarantine measures, many customers/workers cannot move to their places of work or carry out their jobs, which has knock-on effects on incomes, particularly for informal and casually employed workers. Consumers in many economies are unable or reluctant to purchase goods and services. Given the current environment of uncertainty and fear, enterprises are likely to delay investments, purchases of goods and the hiring of workers. Consequently, it is based on the above that this study seeks to examine the effect of covid-19 on organizational performance, Chai, O. 2019.

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of covid-19 on business performance in ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano. However, the following are the specific objectives:

- (i) To determine the effect of social distancing on business performance in Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano.
- (ii) To examine the effect of prevention of large gathering on business performance in Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano.

- (iii) To determine the effect of travel restrictions on business performance in Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano.

2.0 Literature Review

Concept of Covid-19 Pandemic

The current outbreak of the novel coronavirus also known as COVID-19 was declared as a public health emergency by the WHO where over a million people have been affected by the disease with over 50000 deaths till date. 200 countries have reported cases of COVID-19 with United States having the greatest number of cases and Italy having most fatalities caused by death (Chai, 2019). The severity of the disease ranges from asymptomatic to fatal stages mostly affecting people with a weak immune system and the elderly population. COVID-19 differs from SARS-COV where patients in the prodromal period have the ability to produce large amount of virus replications contributing to the spread of the infections. In SARS-COV patient's transmission occurred only when severe illness was observed making it easier to be detected unlike COVID-19 (Yu, Lin, Chiu & He, 2017). The route of transmission predominantly has been identified as through droplet and airborne transmission, several studies are still being conducted over the presence of COVID-19 in air samples and WHO has not identified the disease as an airborne disease till date (Jackson, 2009).

The COVID-19 outbreak is proving to be an unprecedented disaster, especially in the most afflicted countries including China, Italy, Iran and USA in all aspects, especially health, social and economic. It is too early to forecast any realistic scenario, but it will have a strong impact worldwide. If high income countries, especially those already affected by the outbreak, seem to face a catastrophic perspective, in low-income countries there seem to be two possible scenarios. In particular, in the worst-case scenario, when the COVID-19 outbreaks, the majority of countries will be unprepared, with low resources allocated for affording the viral emergency and the consequences will be catastrophic. In the best case scenario, similarly to the global outbreak of the SARS-CoV in 2003, also the COVID-19 will not affect Africa or South America on a large scale suggesting that respiratory viruses spread more

effectively in the winter and, therefore, the southern hemisphere will be affected later in the year, if at all (Sebastian, Lodha & Kabra, 2009).

Concept of Covid-19 Social Distancing

According to Chai (2019), social distancing is a method to minimize crowd interactions and prevent the spread of disease within groups of people. This is a common practice which has been carried out over generations to minimize the spread of virus by limiting its reproduction rate among communities. Also, Chai (2020), social distancing is a method to minimize crowd interactions and prevent the spread of disease within groups of people.

Concept of Covid-19 Prevention of Large Gathering

Group social gatherings and large community events, such as spectator events, weddings, and other celebrations, bring people from multiple communities into close contact with each other and have the potential to increase COVID-19 transmission. The primary tools to control the spread of COVID-19 are to reduce exposure to respiratory droplets through physical distancing and face coverings, increase hand hygiene, and avoid shared items and common touch surfaces. The goals of this guidance are to protect people attending and working at the event and the local community from COVID-19 infection; and to reduce community transmission and introductions of COVID-19 into new communities.

Concept of Covid-19 Travel Restrictions

The COVID-19 pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) has caused national governments worldwide to mandate several generic infection control measures such as physical distancing, self-isolation, and closure of non-essential shops, restaurants schools, among others. Some models suggest physical distancing would have to persist for 3 months to mitigate the peak effects on health systems and could be required on an intermittent basis for 12 to 18 months (Flaxman, et al2020). Apart from these control measures travel restrictions during the early phase of the China outbreak were useful to confine it to Wuhan, the major source of the outbreak (Kraeamer et al2020) although ultimately these measures did not prevent the

spread of COVID-19 to other regions of China. The global spread of the SARS-CoV-2 has clearly been associated with regional and international travel which has contributed to the pandemic (Candido et al2020). To limit cross-border spread, both regionally and globally, many countries have swiftly adopted sweeping measures, including full lockdowns of shops, companies, shutting down airports, imposing travel restrictions and completely sealing their borders, to contain transmission (Gostin, et al 2020). The grounding of international travel as part of the global response to prevent spread has caused profound disruption of travel and trade and has threatened the survival of many airlines, travel companies, and associated businesses.

Theoretical Review

Cognitive Placement Theory

Cognitive Placement Theory was propounded by Alex (2015) who determines how human resource managers appoint the performance grade of employees into one group. Top performers and bad performers are interested to human resource managers, because top performers make up the “talent management” group and bad performers make up the “business performance” group. Talent performers might be candidates for management positions, because they have the best individual performance, while bad performers may need business performance process to upgrade their knowledge and individual performance.

Review of Empirical Works Related to the Study

Hasanat et.al,(2020) has research on the impact of COVID-19 on E-business. This article explains that pandemic heavily affected small and medium-sized retailers due to the low footprint on consumers, and also consumers' buying behavior also affected heavily by the novel coronavirus. Not only small and medium-sized businesses but also manufacturing, education, and others also affected by a coronavirus. COVID-19 impacted all types of businesses, all around the world. The economy goes down for that reason. But the world cannot run like this. Everything started to open and organizations are prepared for physical works under ‘new normal’ rules. Work from home and digitalization of the workplace during

COVID-19 was a good initiative but not for a long time because of digital inequalities.

Beaunoyer Elisabeth et.al.(2020), works on the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and digital inequalities where it was explained that technological differences, ethnicity, and differences of other staff create these inequalities. Employees from rural or remote places won't have the fastest internet to conduct work from home tasks family member's interference will disturb works during work from the home period.

According to Ince (2020), employee's performance during COVID-19 has been decreased compared to the condition before COVID-19. Due to COVID-19, employees have to work from home and it has negatively impacted employee's productivity. Hence employee performance reduced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology

Population of the Study

Population according to Ifidon (2017) is the entire entity that is of interest to the researcher; it is the

aggregate of all elements that conform to some designated set of specifications. Ibrahim (2013) also define population in keeping with the study, sometimes, the entire population is specifically small, and the researcher can include the entire population in the study.

Therefore, the population of this study is the aggregate number of staff of Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano. The total population of Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano staff is one hundred and twenty five (125).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sample size according to Adefila (2018) has been defined as taking any proportion of population or universe as representative of the population. Since the population of the study is large, the sample size of the study is this study will be ninety-seven (97) staff of Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano, using Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Similarly, a total of 97 staff of Ummza rice Nigeria Limited, Kano was considered using probability sampling technique of simple random where each and every staff will be given an equal chance of becoming part of the sample.

Discussion and Findings

Table 1: level of Covid-19 Pandemic

Social Distance (SD)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation	Rank
Social distancing affects the production process of the organization.	3.3487	.54321	Low	
Social distancing delayed the production process of the organization.	4.2134	.76532	High	
Social distancing makes it difficult to communicate with customers.	3.2145	.52341	High	
Social distancing affects the performance of the organization.	4.2341	.65432	High	
Total	3.7527	0.6216	High	1

Prevention of Large Gathering (PLG)				
Closure of market places as a prevention of large gathering reduces the performance of the organization.	2.3452	.06543	Low	
Products produced by the organization are delivered to supermarkets due to market closure.	3.3942	.62341	High	
Numbers of workers on duty are reduced due to large gathering prevention in the organization.	3.5647	.85462	High	
The organization close production process during covid-19 pandemic to prevent large gathering.	3.8765	.42671	High	
Total	3.2952	0.4925	High	3
Travel Restrictions (TR)				
Travel/movement restrictions on customers affect the performance of the business.	3.1345	.51131	High	
Restriction of customers' movement renders the production process of the organization unstable.	4.2310	.02150	High	
Despite travel/movement restrictions, the organization production process is stable.	2.5462	.51131	Low	
Travel/movement restriction does not affect the product schedule of the business.	3.7853	.90749	High	
Total	3.4243	0.4879	High	2
Sub Total	3.4907	0.5340	High	

Source: Primary Data, 2021

Level of Social Distance

Social distance was measured using physical distance of at least 6feet (about two arm's length) of social distance. The responses were analysed using means and rank. The result tabulated in table 1 indicates that the level of social distance is high with a mean value of 3.7527. This is in conformity with Prems, et al (2020) findings that state the level of social distance is high. Moreover, this finding contradicts Maharaj and Kleczkowski (2020) findings that found that the level of social distance low.

Level of Prevention of Large Gathering

Prevention of large gathering was measured using closure of market places and closure of event centres to prevent large gathering. The responses were analysed using means and rank. The result tabulated in table 1 revealed that the level of prevention of

large gathering is high with a mean value of 3.2952. This is in conformity with Kraeamer, et al (2020) finding that states that prevention of large gathering is high. Moreover, this finding contradicts Flaxman, et al (2020) findings that prevention of large gathering is low.

Level of Travel Restrictions

Travel restrictions were measured using closure of local and international flight as well as closure of inter-state movement as travel restrictions. The responses were analysed using means and rank. The result tabulated in table 1 showed that the level of travel restrictions is high with a mean value of 3.4243. This finding is in conformity with Candido, et al (2020) research which revealed that travel restriction is high. However, this finding contradicts Gostin, et al (2020) studies which revealed that travel restrictions are low.

Table 2: Correlation between Covid-19 Pandemic and Business Performance

Variables Regressed	R	R ²	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on H ₀
Covid-19 and Business Performance	0.821	0.759	0.400	Insignificant effect	Accepted

Source: Primary Data, 2021

The result in table 2 indicates that covid-19 is negatively and insignificantly correlated with all aspects of business performance (sig. 0.400). This finding is in agreement with many other researchers such as Chai (2019) that found that as covid-19 cases increases, business performance decreases. This was

also reaffirmed by R value of 0.821, which shows a negative relationship between covid-19 pandemic and business performance. This negative correlation further explains that as the covid-19 cases increases, it negatively affect business performance.

Table 3: Regression Analysis on Covid-19 and Business Performance

Variables Regressed	R	F	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision
Covid-19 and Business Performance	0.821	80.890	0.400	Insignificant Effect	Accepted
	Beta	T	Sig	Insignificant Effect	Accepted
Social Distance	.421	3.541	.610	Insignificant Effect	Accepted
Prevention and Large Gathering	.543	2.994	.910	Insignificant Effect	Accepted
Travel Restrictions	.384	7.009	.432	Insignificant Effect	Accepted

Source: Primary Data, 2021

Table 3 above shows that the model explained 82.1% ($R^2=0.821$, $p<0.05$) of variation of business performance. The other variations in business performance i.e. 17.9% were explained by other external factors that are not included in the model such as government policy and economic condition. Therefore, this hypothesized relationship was confirmed by the results of Bi-variate Pearson correlation, where negative correlations were observed within each pairs of the covid-19 pandemic dimensions and business performance measures. Nevertheless, these correlations varied in intensity.

Moreover, Beta shows the relative contribution of each construct to the business performance. The

regression result in table 3 also reaffirms that covid-19 pandemic negatively and insignificantly correlate with business performance ($F= 80.890$ and sig. = 0.400). This shows that as the cases of covid-19 increases, it lead to decrease in profitability and performance of business. This was reaffirming by sig. value of 0.610, 0.910 and 0.432 respectively.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the results revealed that the level of covid-19 pandemic is high with a mean value of 3.4907. Also, the findings revealed that the level of business performance is also high with a mean value of 4.9369. Moreover, the study found an insignificant and negative relationship between covid-19 pandemic

and business performance ($F= 80.890$ and $\text{sig.} = 0.400, 0.610, 0.910$ and 0.432) respectively.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary

Based on the findings, the study summarize that, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is able to paralyze the global economy that occurs in all parts of the world, many developed countries that have the latest technology and qualified health technology are still having difficulties with regard to Covid-19 pandemic, which impact on the economy of their countries, increasing unemployment resulting from termination of employment, increased crime rates, reduced public purchasing power of the market so that this will make it difficult for a country to run its economy, thereby affecting the global economy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the study revealed that the level of covid-19 pandemic is high with a mean value of 3.4907. Also, the findings revealed that the level of business performance is also high with a mean value of 4.9369. Moreover, the study found insignificant and negative relationship between covid-19 pandemic and business performance ($F= 80.890$ and $\text{sig.} = 0.610, 0.910$ and 0.432) respectively.

Based on the results of field analysis shows that, the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic greatly affects the global economy as well as performance of business in getting raw materials obtained from various countries, where some of the countries such as America, Germany and European Union countries stop production process which hampered production process of businesses from getting raw materials. The Covid-19 pandemic greatly affects business performance, in terms of raw material supply, it hampered raw material prices and make it unstable, and declining sales which results in low purchasing power which certainly have an impact on the sustainability of business performance.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested based on the findings of the study:

- (i) The negative impact of covid-19 (social distance, lockdown and travel restrictions) on business performance and individuals were much, governments should ease the lockdown with good measure in place so that people may return to businesses.
- (ii) Nigerian Emergency Economic Stimulus Bill content of 2020 should be properly implemented, including key insights, consideration and strategies for COVID-19 response in Nigeria in order to improve business performance.
- (iii) Finally, business owners should take advantage of the Nigerian Emergency Economic Stimulus Bill content as follows:
 - Provide temporary relief to companies and individuals to alleviate the adverse financial consequences of a slowdown in economic and business activities caused by COVID-19;
 - Protect the employment status of Nigerians who might otherwise become unemployed as a consequence of management decision to retrench personnel in response to the prevailing economic realities;
 - Provide for a moratorium on mortgage obligations for individuals at a time of widespread economic uncertainty;
 - Eliminate additional fiscal bottleneck on the importation of medical equipment, medication, personal protection equipment and other such medical necessities as may be required for the treatment and management of the COVID-19 disease in Nigeria, to ease the burden of importation and financial burden thereby fostering easier access and reduction in the price; and
 - Cater for the general financial wellbeing of Nigerians pending the eradication of the pandemic and a return to economic stability

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